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SUBJECT: MORE FRENCH THOUGHTS ON IAEA COMMITTEE ON SAFEGUARDS AND VERIFICATION

REF: A) STATE 159113 B) PARIS 5866

Classified By: Political Minister-Counselor Josiah Rosenblatt, Reason 1
.4 B/D

1. (C) MFA official covering IAEA issues Hugues de Longevialle shared with us September 7 some additional comments on U.S. proposals for the Committee on Safeguards and Verification. His general assessment was that the MFA agreed with many of our proposals. He also shared the following thoughts with us in no specific order of importance:

-- On general points of discussion, Longevialle cautioned that it was not in the IAEA's mandate to "enforce compliance with nuclear nonproliferation obligations." The IAEA could monitor, but enforcement actions were a UNSC responsibility. Additionally, he suggested that it might be useful to review the IAEA's "93 plus 2" program, as it might help with verification issues.

-- Elaborating further on the question of detection of clandestine activities, he said we need to be clear about the respective roles of the Agency and the Secretariat. By way of example, he said it could become a problem if the Committee, operating under the Additional Protocol, discovered undeclared activity, made it public, sought referral to UNSC under 1540, and then found itself unable to work directly with the proliferator due to the Committee's lack of enforcement responsibilities. Longevialle opined that the NSG might be better suited for enforcement.

-- Longevialle noted that we must take care that U.S. proposals not duplicate the role of the Standing Advisory Group on Safeguards Implementation (SAGSI). Referring back to our Non-paper (long-term actions), he said that the SAGSI was better at evaluating and reporting compliance to the Secretariat.

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-- France would also propose additional transparency measures for the consideration of the Committee. Specifically, France would suggest the reporting of high-enriched uranium, i.e., countries would communicate to the Agency information on their stocks of high-enriched uranium.

2. (C) Additional points: France is fine with the U.S. offer to update the Annexes to the Additional Protocol, although, Longevialle added, care should be taken not to expand or intrude on the NSG's responsibilities.

-- Longevialle said the MFA was unclear on the intent of our final comments on "confidentiality," under the "longer-term actions."

-- On format of the proposed meetings for the Committee, Longevialle said France is reticent about the idea for four meetings per year. He said that many delegations would find it difficult to participate. He suggested fewer meetings, perhaps three meetings annually of three-days length, but obviously the length of each meeting would depend on the issues for discussion. The French, however, would support informal consultations in between the scheduled meetings.

3. (C) In response to our queries for French suggestions on candidates to chair the Committee, Longevialle admitted that the MFA had not focused on the question, although it should be someone who represents a balance between technical staff and political-level representation. He conjectured that the candidate could also be chosen from outside the IAEA, possibly a retired senior IAEA official.

-- Referring to our "medium-term action" suggestions for the working group of technical experts, Longevialle put in a plug for the EU's European Safeguards Association for Research and Development (ESARDA), noting that this agency could also provide input to the technical working group.

-- Longevialle's last comment pertained to the "medium-term action" proposal for review of the IAEA role in investigating and reporting weaponization activities. The MFA strongly believe